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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
08/479,997	06/07/95	ENGELHARDT	D ENZ-5 (D6) (C2)
		HM22/0203	EXAMINER
			HOUTTEMAN, S
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
		1634	22
DATE MAILED: 02/03/99			

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No. 08/479,997	Applicant(s) Engelhardt et al.
Examiner Scott Houtteman	Group Art Unit 1634

Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11/20/98 and 1/25/99

This action is **FINAL**.

Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire three month(s), or thirty days, whichever is longer, from the mailing date of this communication. Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Disposition of Claims

Claim(s) 454-575 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

Claim(s) 454-575 is/are rejected.

Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

Claims _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.

The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is approved disapproved.

The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

All Some* None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been received.

received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____.

received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____

Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

Notice of References Cited, PTO-892

Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____

Interview Summary, PTO-413

Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

--- SEE OFFICE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ---

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1. Since this application is eligible for the transitional procedure of 37 CFR 1.129(a), and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(r) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has, for a second time, been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.129(a). Applicant's submission filed 11/20/98 has been entered.

2. Applicant's response, filed 11/20/98, has been carefully considered with the following effect:

The objections and rejections of the previous Office action mailed 9/29/98, have been maintained.

3. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

4. Claims 459-472 and 474-575 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention for reasons of record. This is a "new matter" rejection.

Support was not found were indicated in the specification, nor elsewhere, for the following limitations in Claims 459-472 and 474-575:

Claims 459-463, specific chemical compositions of linkages;

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Claims 464-472, 482-569, specific identity of labels and points of attachment of the "SIG"

moiety to internal phosphates;

Claims 474-477 and 570-575, the "composition" limitation, in addition to the above identified limitations.

5. Applicant argues in the response, pages 30-32, that support was found in various portions of the specification. This argument is not persuasive. These portions merely recite support for covalent attachment of a SIG moiety to a phosphate moiety and a SIG moiety to the oxygen on a phosphate moiety. Note, there is no support for the attachment of the SIG moiety to the phosphate atom of the phosphate moiety, only to the oxygen atom.

6. Claims 454-575 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention, for reasons of record.

7. Applicant argues that the prior art, such as Halloran, supports enablement. This argument is not persuasive for several reasons:

Halloran discloses the attachment of a specific signal moiety, a protein, to the phosphorus atom of the phosphate moiety using a specific linker, a -C-(CH₂)₄-N- chain. In contrast, the claims are drawn to a much broader category, a generic "SIG" moiety and linkage, and specific

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compounds such as those recited in claim 464 -- magnetic, hormone, metal containing "SIG" moieties, for example.) Thus, the scope of the enablement is not commensurate with the scope of the claims.

8. In addition, several of the reference articles are drawn to labeling a mononucleotide and express doubt about labeling an oligonucleotide. Armstrong et al., Eur. J. Biochem. 0:33-38, 1976, teaches that the labeled mononucleotides are "strong competitive inhibitors" of the reaction which is necessary to produce a labeled oligonucleotide from a labeled mononucleotide. See Armstrong, p. 33, col. 1. This reaction is the use of the labeled mononucleotide as a substrate for the polymerase mediated synthesis of the oligonucleotide.

While Armstrong teaches that some labeled mononucleotide will be incorporated, Armstrong teaches no guidance as to which of the myriad labels within the scope of these claims will function in the claimed invention. Lacking any guidance in the specification and in view of the breadth of the claims, it would require undue experimentation in order to enable a reasonable number of embodiments of these claims. The skilled artisan would have to experiment with various SIG moieties, linkages and attachment sites, as well as various reaction protocols and protecting groups.

9. Claims 454-575 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 for being unpatentable over Gohlke et al., US Patent 4,378,458, 3/1983, filed 3/1981 (Gohlke) in view of Sodja et al., Nucleic Acids Res., 5(2):385-401, 1978 (Sodja) and further in view of applicant's admissions.

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Applicant argues that the opening of the ring sugar in Sodja distinguishes Sodja from the claims of the current application. It is argued that the terminal nucleotide, with the open sugar, is outside the scope of the claims.

This argument is not persuasive. Sodja reads on the claimed invention because of the scope of the term "SIG" moiety. There is nothing in the limitation "SIG" which would exclude the terminal nucleotide, with the open ribose sugar from being a part of the "SIG" moiety. The "terminal" nucleotide in the claimed product would be the second nucleotide from the end in the Sodja reference, which has a closed ribose sugar ring.

Applicant argues that Gohlke does not teach labeling ribonucleotides and thus does not suggest the claimed DNA products. This argument is not persuasive. First, many of the claims of this case are not limited to DNA products but read on ribonucleotides. Second, it is Gohlke in view of Sodja which is the basis of the rejection. There is no evidence that Gohlke cannot be applied to Sodja for the expected benefit of generating other types of labeled oligonucleotides using the Gohlke labels.

10. Claims 454-575 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 for being unpatentable over Halloran et al., J. Immunol. 96(3):373-378, 1966 or Miller et al. 20(7):1874-1880, 1981.

Both Halloran and Miller teach specific labels, (SIG moieties such as proteins and thiophosphates) attached to nucleic acids. See Halloran p. 373, Fig. 1 and col. 2; Miller p. 1874, col. 1. These prior art references differ from the claims in the recitation of some specific labels and linkages. It would have been *prima facie* obvious, however, to one of ordinary skill in the art at

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the time the invention was made to substitute any linker or label in the methods of Halloran and Miller for the expected benefit of constructing multiple labels. Given the fact that diverse labels such as proteins and thiophosphates, the ordinary artisan would have reasonably expected any moiety used as a label to function in the claimed invention.

11. Repeating an important point from a previous Office action, applicants arguments to the 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph rejections have provided strong evidence of obviousness and vice-versa. For example, the references used to support enablement, Halloran and Miller add evidence of obviousness.

It is important that the arguments for patentability explain, that the prior art supplied by applicant, for example Halloran and Miller, can buttress the specification--providing needed evidence that the thin "SIG Phosphate" disclosure both "describes" and "enables" the detailed invention now claimed--but that these same prior art references do not render the claims obvious.

Furthermore, the criticisms of the obviousness rejections must be made without undermining the enablement rejection. For example, if arguing that Halloran and Miller are somehow "non-enabled" one must justify how the specification can be enabled. After all, the prior art contains much more detail than that found in the specification.

Finally, the specification is held to a higher standard than the teachings of the prior art supplied in an obviousness rejection. As stated in a previous office action:

35 U.S.C. § 112 provides that, in return for the grant of monopoly, the specification must enable one skilled in the art to "make and use" the invention without "undue experimentation" whereas 35 U.S.C. § 103 makes no such requirement. Thus, a teaching

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of how to use a compound can be entirely adequate to render a claim obvious but, at the same time, entirely inadequate to support the allowance of such a claim.

12. Papers relating to this application may be submitted to Technology Center 1600 by facsimile transmission. The faxing of such papers must conform with the notice published in the Official Gazette, 1096 OG 30 (November 15, 1989). The Technology Center 1600 Fax numbers are (703) 305-3014 and 308-4242.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott Houtteman whose telephone number is (703) 308-3885. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday-Friday from 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Mondays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, W. Gary Jones, can be reached at (703) 308-1152.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Technology Center receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196.

Scott Houtteman
February 1, 1999


SCOTT W. HOUTTEMAN
PRIMARY EXAMINER